

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
a file analyzer to perform a scan operation on an incoming file and produce a scanning result;  
a signature generator to produce a digital signature, inclusive of the scanning result, of a digital signature chain, the digital signature chain is verified prior to accessing the incoming file and without the accompanying digital signature, access to the incoming file is precluded by the file analyzer; and  
a time stamp indicator coupled to the signature generator, the time stamp indicator to provide information of the scan operation for insertion into the digital signature chain.
2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the incoming file is precluded from being opened if the verified digital signature chain indicates an unacceptable file integrity.
3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the incoming file is precluded from being executed if the verified digital signature chain indicates an unacceptable file integrity.
4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the incoming file is accessed if the verified digital signature chain indicates acceptable file integrity.
5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the file analyzer performs the scan operation and outputs the scanned file in addition to the scanning result to accompany the digital signature chain.
6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus is employed within a platform coupled to a local area network that a platform providing the incoming file is coupled to.

7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus is employed within a platform coupled to a wide area network.

8. (Cancelled).

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the platform further comprises a second control unit coupled to the first control unit both being integrated into a chipset, the second control unit including a token bus interface.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the platform further comprises a token bus coupled to the token bus interface and in communication with at least one token.

11. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:  
sending a file to a signatory via a network, the signatory checking the file and providing a digital signature chain indicating file integrity of the file and timing information of the file checking operation as conducted by the signatory;

verifying the digital signature chain returned from the signatory via the network prior to accessing the file; and

accessing the file if the verified digital signature chain indicates an acceptable file integrity.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein accessing the file comprises opening the file if the verified digital signature chain indicates the acceptable file integrity.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein accessing the file further comprises refusing to open the file if the verified digital signature chain indicates an unacceptable file integrity.

14. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein verifying the digital signature chain includes determining whether contents of a digital signature associated with the digital signature chain include a message regarding the integrity of the file.

15. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the digital signature chain includes at least one digital signature and at least one certificate.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein verifying the digital signature chain includes accessing contents of the at least one certificate to determine if the signatory is authorized and accessing contents of the at least one digital signature to determine the integrity of the file.

17. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the network is a local area network (LAN).

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the timing information to identify a time that a scan operation is conducted when checking the file ~~the network is a wide area network (WAN).~~

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~18~~ 17 wherein the scanner is one of a virus detector, an intrusion detector, and a file integrity checker.

20. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the file contains at least one of a code and a data.

21. (Currently Amended) A computer program product comprising:  
a machine-readable medium having program code embedded therein, the computer program product comprising:

platform readable program code for sending a file to a remotely located signatory via a network, the signatory checking the file and providing a digital signature chain indicating file integrity of the file and timing information of the file checking operation as conducted by the signatory;

platform readable program code for verifying the digital signature chain returned from the signatory via the network; and

platform readable program code for preventing access to the file when the verified digital signature chain indicates an unacceptable file integrity and precluding access to the file if no digital signature chain is associated with the file.

22. (Cancelled).

23. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 2221, wherein the platform readable program code for accessing the file if the verified digital signature chain indicates an acceptable file integrity.